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[55] FIGS. 7A-7D show simplified bottom views of the outlet portion of a variety of alternative embodiments of gas distribution face plates in accordance with the present invention, each bearing different orientations of elongated slots. Face plate outlet portion 660 of FIG. 7A bears a plurality of non-continuous slots 662 oriented in a circumferential direction. Face plate outlet portion 664 of FIG. 7B bears a plurality of non-continuous slots 666 oriented in a radial direction. Face plate outlet portion 668 of FIG. 7C bears a plurality of non-continuous slots 670 that are exclusively oriented neither concentrically nor in a radial direction. Face plate outlet portion 672 of FIG. 7D bears a plurality of non-continuous slots 674 in combination with conventional holes 676.

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-11 and 14.

Please amend claims 12 and 15-17 to read as follows:

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12. (Amended) An apparatus for forming a material on a semiconductor wafer, the apparatus comprising:
a processing chamber defined by walls;
a wafer support positioned within the processing chamber and configured to receive a semiconductor wafer;
a processing gas supply; and
a gas distribution showerhead overlying the wafer support and including a tapered face plate proximate to the wafer support, an edge of the tapered face plate exhibiting a reduced thickness relative to a thickness of a center of the face plate to create a taper angle, such that material deposited on a wafer in contact with the wafer support exhibits a uniform center-to-edge thickness, the tapered faceplate further comprising,
an inlet portion configured to receive a flow of a processing gas, the inlet portion comprising an aperture having a width, and
an outlet portion configured to convey the processing gas flow to a semiconductor wafer, the outlet portion comprising an elongated slot in fluid communication with the aperture.

15. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the elongated slot has a length at least one-half a thickness of the face plate.

13 16. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the elongated slot is circular and continuous.

17. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 12 wherein a width of the elongated slot is greater than the width of the aperture.
